



IEEE 802.3 Interpretations Report 14th March 2011, Singapore

Wael William Diab
Vice-Chair, IEEE 802.3 Working Group
wdiab@broadcom.com

Interpretations Status

- 2 new interpretation requests received
 - 1-03/11 – 1000BASE-X Auto-negotiation
 - <http://www.ieee802.org/3/interp/interp-1-0311.pdf>
 - Assigned prior to the deadline
 - 2-03/11 – Isolation Criteria
 - <http://www.ieee802.org/3/interp/interp-2-0311.pdf>
 - Assigned after the deadline
 - Unless the Working Group would like to do otherwise, the default state is for this request to be considered at the next plenary session per the working group agreed deadline

Motion to Consider 2-03/11

- Move to suspend the rules regarding the assignment deadline and consider 2-03/11.
- M: B. Grow
- S: G. Thompson
- ($\geq 75\%$)
- Motion passes by voice vote without opposition

Plans for week

- Meet Tuesday afternoon
 - Work handled as part of the Maintenance TF
 - Please note 1:30PM start
 - Review interpretation request and draft response
- Present response to closing .3 Plenary
 - Three way vote
 - Approve proposed response
 - Reject proposed response
 - Send proposed response out for WG Ballot

Interpretations Web Information

- IEEE 802.3 Interpretations web site:
<http://www.ieee802.org/3/interp/index.html>
- IEEE Standards Companion text and guidelines on interpretations:
<http://standards.ieee.org/guides/companion/part2.html#interpret>

BACKUP

Standards Companion Text

Interpretations are a unique form of commentary on the standard. They are not statements of what the standard should have done or meant to say. Interpretations cannot change the meaning of a standard as it currently stands. Even if the request points out an error in the standard, the interpretation cannot fix that error. The interpretation can suggest that this will be brought up for consideration in a revision or amendment (or, depending on the nature of the error, an errata sheet might be issued).

However, an interpretation has no authority to do any of this. It can only discuss, address, and clarify what the standard currently says. The challenge for the interpreters is to distinguish between their expertise on what "should be," their interests in what they 'would like the standard to be," and what the standard says. Interpretations are often valuable, though, because the request will point out problems that might otherwise have gone unaddressed.

Standards Companion Guidelines

- 1) The standard is what it says. If the words are substantively wrong, then a corrective corrigenda via the balloting process is the correct response.
- 2) If the standard is ambiguous, then the interpretation must favor a looser requirement rather than a more restrictive one. Again, a corrective corrigenda can be initiated if needed.
- 3) If two parts of the standard contradict one another, then a rationale should be created and the IEEE errata process should be applied to correct the contradiction.